



## ARL is an Authority on Nutrition and the Science of Balancing Body Chemistry Through Hair Tissue Mineral Analysis!

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# Irritable Bowel Syndrome

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## Irritable Bowel Syndrome

A common health condition that responds well to nutritional programs is irritable bowel syndrome or IBS. A syndrome is a collection of symptoms that occur together. The symptoms of IBS include chronic alternating periods of constipation and diarrhea. Often there is pain and/or tenderness in the area of the colon or large intestine. Digestive discomfort such as intestinal gas may also occur. IBS is usually a benign condition, but it is also a warning sign of nutritional imbalance.

### Causes Of Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Physicians may diagnose IBS when a specific cause for bowel disturbance cannot be found, however nutritional aspects of IBS are often overlooked.

Improper diet is often a factor. Common dietary causes are:

- ***Too much sugar***

This includes too much fruit or juices. The sugars may trigger candida overgrowth, or unbalance the intestinal flora in some other manner.

- ***Not enough fiber***

Adequate fiber moves food through the intestine faster, helping prevent putrefaction and fermentation. Fiber also helps synthesize certain vitamins in the intestine. More whole grains and vegetables or dietary fiber tablets will provide extra fiber. Occasionally, too much fiber in the diet is harmful if it irritates a sensitive colon. Some types of fiber are more irritating than others.

- ***Low protein***

Adequate protein is critical for the colon because the colon is a rapidly growing tissue of the body. It must continually renew itself. Diets inadequate in protein can aggravate colon problems.

- ***Food allergies***

Food allergies or sensitivities can provoke the symptoms of IBS. Any food can be the culprit.

- ***Poor digestion***

A deficiency of digestive enzymes, overeating, drinking with meals, hurried meals or poor food combinations may allow poorly digested food to pass into the colon where the food ferments or putrefies.

### Other Causes

***Psychological stress*** can play a role in IBS. Stress definitely worsens symptoms. The intestines are a common site for psychosomatic illness. That is, psychological stress may be expressed as intestinal symptoms such as pain, ulcers, diarrhea, etc.

***Intestinal parasites*** may need to be ruled out. Amoebic infection usually causes bloody stools and more mucus than IBS. Giardia (parasite) from contaminated water, or bacteria such as salmonella and shigella from food poisoning, can cause similar symptoms.

***Improper bowel flora*** is a cause of IBS. The most common imbalance is overgrowth of candida or chronic mucocutaneous yeast. This is often due to copper imbalance, excessive sugars in the diet, or the use of birth control pills, antibiotics, or steroid medication.

### Hair Analysis Indicators Of IBS

Several hair mineral imbalances are common in cases of IBS:

***Imbalanced phosphorus or zinc levels:*** A hair phosphorus less than 13 mg% or greater than 20 mg% indicates impaired protein utilization. Intestinal lining is sloughed off and replaced faster than any other tissue in the body. For this reason, impaired protein metabolism would be expected to significantly affect bowel function.

Zinc is also needed for protein synthesis. A low or high zinc level often indicates impaired protein synthesis. Low zinc is also associated with emotional instability.

***Copper imbalance:*** Copper interferes with the activity of the zinc-dependent enzymes. Excessive copper disrupts the sulfide-sulfide bonds of protein structures. Copper imbalance greatly favors the overgrowth of yeast in the intestines. Copper imbalance also contributes to fears and anxiety that can worsen the symptoms of IBS.

***Mercury or cadmium toxicity:*** Cadmium displaces zinc in critical enzyme binding sites, resulting in a zinc deficiency. If cadmium is elevated, zinc may be deficient even if the hair zinc reading is within the normal range.

Mercury toxicity is often an indicator of hidden copper toxicity. The copper imbalance will be revealed on a later test. Mercury toxicity can affect the digestive system as well as other organ systems.

***Low energy and a slow oxidation rate:*** Irritable bowel syndrome is more common in slow oxidizers with low energy levels.

***Low sodium/potassium ratio.*** If the patient is a fast oxidizer, the sodium/potassium ratio is usually low. This low ratio reflects excessive protein catabolism, or breakdown. This often causes digestive disturbances.

### Correction Of Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Most cases of IBS respond very well to nutritional methods. The diet needs to be checked for low protein, too much sugars and inadequate fiber. Eating habits are important as well. If eating a particular food aggravates the condition a food sensitivity is very likely. Food sensitivities may be reduced through food rotation and more permanently by a nutritional balancing program.

Correcting diet is essential. However, to correct underlying nutritional causes a complete nutritional program is often necessary. The supplement program will help correct copper and zinc imbalances, low energy, poor protein metabolism and toxic metal accumulations. Acidophilus and caprylic acid are helpful to add to the supplement program if one suspects yeast overgrowth. Very often symptoms disappear within three to six months of beginning an individualized supplement program.

Stress reduction may be important to prevent recurrences. Lifestyle changes that promote a relaxed pace, healthful eating habits and control of the emotions are very helpful.

If the above does not correct the symptoms, stool analysis or other medical tests may be needed. However, most cases of IBS respond well when nutritional causes have been addressed in a thorough and scientific manner.

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